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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/613,831	07/03/2003	Wang Wei Min	03-108	6808
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FOOTHILL LAW GROUP, LLP 3333 BOWERS AVE., SUITE 130 SANTA CLARA, CA 95054				
			EXAMINER MAYES, DIONNE WALLS	
			ART UNIT 1731	PAPER NUMBER

DATE MAILED: 05/02/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/613,831

Applicant(s)

MIN, WANG WEI

Examiner

Dionne Walls Mayes

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 10 April 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 and 14-18 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 and 14-18 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 6 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on April 10, 2006 has been entered.

Claim Objections

2. Claim 6 is objected to because it depends from itself. Correction is requested. For examination purposes, it will be presumed that claim 6 depends from claim 1.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claim 1-6, 8-12, 14-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Grasso (US. Pat. No. 3,313,308) in view of Walters (US. Pat. No. 3,196,881) and Mensik (US. Pat. No. 4,517,989).

Regarding claim 1, Grasso teaches an article for smoking an elongate tobacco product comprising:

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(a) a mouthpiece having an inside surface and an outside surface, comprising a first end defining a receptacle therein and a second end comprising an outside surface capable of being grasped in a smoker's mouth and defining an outlet chamber within the mouthpiece, wherein the mouthpiece consists of a single piece of molded plastic

(Figures 2 and 3); and

(b) a holder, the holder being removably inserted into the receptacle (Figure 2), the holder comprising,

i) a first section disposed at an end of the holder defining an inside chamber capable of holding the elongate tobacco product in place and allowing a volume for collection of combustion products therein, the first section having an outside surface with a diameter too large to fit into the receptacle in the mouth piece (Figure 3),

ii) a second section in series with the first section and having an inside and an outside surface, the second section contoured to fit into the receptacle in the mouthpiece and defining a continuation of the inside chamber (Figure 3 reference number 18),

iii) a first annular support (Figure 3, reference number 48) and a second annular support (Figure 3, reference number 36) on the outside surface of the second section, each annular support being capable of holding a resilient ring thereon,

iv) an annular baffle on the outside of the second section between the first annular support and the second annular support (Figures 2 and 3, reference number 26; column 2, lines 20-21), and

v) one resilient ring supported on one of the annular supports (Figures 2 and 3), wherein the mouthpiece and the holder are contoured such that when the holder is inserted into the mouthpiece the resilient ring is in contact with the inner surface of the mouthpiece forming a sealed chamber in the annular space between the resilient ring and one of the annular supports between the outside surface of the second section and the inside surface of the mouthpiece (Figure 3; 63-65), and wherein the holder defines at least one restricted passage from the inside chamber to the sealed chamber, said at least one restricted passage being directed towards in the inside surface of the mouthpiece between the two annular supports, and wherein the holder further defines an exit passage having at least one inlet between the baffle and the second annular support and an exit into the outlet chamber of the mouthpiece (Figure 3; column 3, lines 39-40).

Grasso fails to teach two resilient rings, one resilient ring supported on each annular support. Grasso also fails to teach a holder that consists of a single piece of molded plastic. However, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have used two resilient rings one on each annular support and to have constructed the holder of a single piece of material since such is already known in cigarette holders as evidenced by the Walters reference (see fig. 2). Further, one having ordinary skill in the art would have fabricated both the mouthpiece and the

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holder out of a material, such as plastic, since cigarette mouthpieces and holders are known to be fabricated from plastic as evidenced by the Mensik reference .

Accordingly, claim 1 is rejected.

Regarding claim 2, Grasso teaches that the holder further comprises a barrier in series with the second inside chamber such that combustion products can only pass between the inside chamber and the outlet chamber through a path through the restricted passage, the sealed chamber and the exit passage in sequence (Figure 3; column 3, lines 39-40 and lines 44-46). Accordingly, claim 2 is rejected.

Regarding claim 3-5, Grasso teaches the holder is for cigarettes and the like (claim 1, line 1). Grasso does not specifically teach the holder is for cigarettes of the type without an integral filter, cigarettes with an integral filter, or for cigars. However, because Grasso fails to limit his teaching to any particular type of cigarette or tobacco product, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention that Grasso's teaching could have been applied to a cigarette with an integral filter, a cigarette without an integral filter, or to a cigar. Accordingly, claims 3-6 are rejected.

Regarding claim 8, Grasso teaches the holder has symmetry about a central plane, wherein any cross section perpendicular to the central plane is circular (Figure 3; column 2, lines 7-12; column 2, lines 55-56). Accordingly, claim 8 is rejected.

Regarding claim 9, Grasso teaches that at least one restricted passage is perpendicular to the central plane of symmetry whereby combustion products are made to change direction by approximately 90 degrees in passing between the second inside

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chamber and the sealed chamber (column 3, lines 20-28). Accordingly, claim 9 is rejected.

Regarding claim 10, Grasso teaches that at least one restricted passage comprises two diametrically opposed passages through the holder (Figure 3).

Accordingly, claim 10 is rejected.

Regarding claim 11, Grasso teaches that the exit passage causes a change in direction, whereby combustion products are made to change direction by approximately 90 degrees in passing between the sealed chamber and the outlet chamber (Figure 3).

Accordingly, claim 11 is rejected.

Regarding claim 12, Grasso teaches that at least one inlet to the exit passage comprises two diametrically opposed passages through the holder (Figure 3).

Accordingly, claim 12 is rejected.

Regarding claim 14, Grasso fails to teach a process for smoking an elongate tobacco product so as to reduce the amount of tarry materials consumed. However, Grasso does teach an article for smoking an elongate tobacco product so as to reduce the amount of tarry materials consumed. The following acts all being obvious to one ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention during the use of the article:

a) placing the elongate tobacco product in a receptacle of a holder, a portion of the holder behind the receptacle being removably inserted into a mouthpiece (column 3, lines 57-58);

b) lighting the elongate tobacco product and applying suction to the holder through the mouthpiece such that combustion products are drawn through the holder (column 3, lines 13-19);

c) passing the combustion products through a restricted passage such that the combustion products accelerate, expand and impinge on a side of the mouthpiece into a single sealed chamber formed in an annular space between the holder and the mouthpiece between two resilient rings each forming a seal between the mouthpiece and the holder (Figure 3);

d) allowing tarry materials to condense within said sealed chamber (column 3, lines 29-32 and 50-51); and

e) drawing the remaining combustion products over a baffle into an outlet passage leading to an exit of the mouthpiece whereto suction is applied (column 3, lines 39-46).

Accordingly, claim 14 is rejected.

Regarding claim 15, Grasso teaches the tarry materials accumulating in the sealed chamber (column 3, lines 29-32 and 50-51). Accordingly, claim 15 is rejected.

Regarding claim 16, Grasso teaches the act of a person grasping the portion of the holder extending outside of the mouthpiece in one hand and the mouthpiece in another hand, unthreading the mouthpiece from the holder member (column 3, lines 56-59), and cleaning an outer surface of the holder and an inner surface of the mouthpiece (column 3, lines 60-61). Grasso fails to teach pulling the holder out of the mouthpiece. However, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the

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invention for the person using the article to remove the holder from the mouthpiece, i.e. by unthreading the two pieces or pulling them apart depending on how the two pieces are connected in order to dismantle the article so that it may be cleaned. Accordingly, claim 16 is rejected.

Regarding claim 17, Grasso teaches replacing the holder in the mouthpiece (column 3, lines 72-73). Accordingly, claim 17 is rejected.

Regarding claim 18, Grasso teaches the article (holder) is for cigarettes and the like. Grasso does not specifically teach the holder is for cigarettes of the type without an integral filter, cigarettes with an integral filter, or for cigars. However, because Grasso fails to limit his teaching to any particular type of cigarette or tobacco product, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention that Grasso's teaching could have been applied to a cigarette with an integral filter, a cigarette without an integral filter, or to a cigar. Accordingly, claim 18 is rejected.

5. Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Grasso as applied to claim 1 above, Mensik as applied in claim 6 above, and further in view of Dailey (U.S. Patent No. 3,434,380) and Taylor et al (U.S. PG Pub. 2003/0047526).

Grasso fails to teach what type of plastic the holder is made of and also fails to teach what type of material the holder comprises. However, Mensik teaches a cigarette holder and mouthpiece molded from plastic (claim 2). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to take the teaching of Grasso and combine it with the teaching of Mensik to make a cigarette holder and mouthpiece from plastic. Both Grasso and Mensik fail to teach the mouthpiece comprises

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polystyrene and the holder comprises Acrylonitrile Butadiene Styrene (ABS). However, Dailey teaches a cigarette mouthpiece comprising polystyrene (Figure 1 and column 2, lines 58-62). Taylor teaches that ABS is an injected molded plastic (page 5, para 0066, line 15). As a result, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to take the teachings of Grasso and Mensik and combine them with the teachings of Dailey and Taylor to make an injection molded plastic cigarette holder and mouthpiece out of polystyrene and ABS, respectively.

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments with respect to the claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.


Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Dionne Walls Mayes whose telephone number is (571) 272-1195. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri, 7AM - 4:30PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Steven P. Griffin can be reached on (571) 272-1189. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Dionne Walls Mayes
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1731

May 1, 2006